

# CHANDAMAMA

SEPTEMBER 1992

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Palace"





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So just eat it!

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to refill...

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# Don't you owe the



See my tail  
It's out of a  
Fairy Tale



Nice 'n' funny  
I'm a Bunny



Foxy is my name  
But I'm ob-so tame



Your Bear Hugs  
are warmer  
than mine



Toni

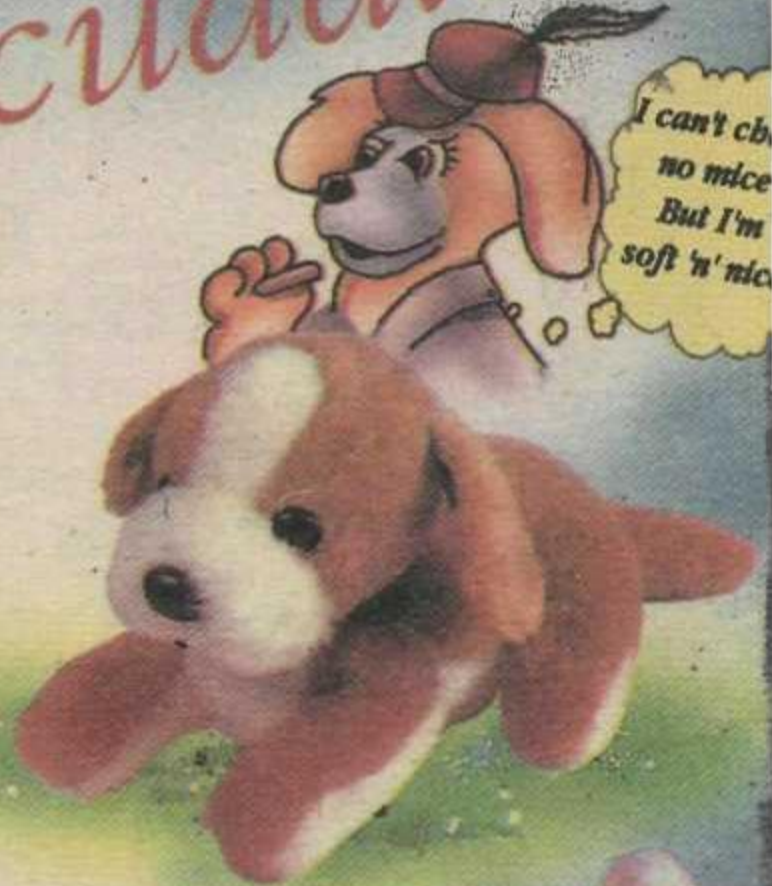




# Little one a cuddles?



Give the  
Lil' Panda  
a Handa



I can't ch  
no mico  
But I'm  
soft 'n' nic



No carrots to eat  
But I'm a treat



ug me tight  
I give you  
le

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# CHANDAMAMA

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And News Flash, Let Us Know  
and More!

## NEXT ISSUE

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**THE MAGIC PALACE:** Having obtained an assurance from both King Veerasen and Commander-in-Chief Ugrasen that his mother would be looked after during his absence, Mahendranath starts out on a search for the missing Princess Vidyavati. He walks along the lake to find an entry into the jungle to take him to the mountain ranges to the west of the kingdom. Inside the forest, he comes upon a hermit's hut. The sanyasi takes an immediate affection for him. He wonders, why?

**VEER HANUMAN:** In successive encounters with the Vanara army, the Rakshasas lose several of their commanders. Ravana sends the chief of them, Prahastha, who tries, for the last time, to persuade Ravana to return Sita to Rama. Prahastha meets with the same fate as that of his predecessors. Ravana now gets ready to go for a combat himself. Rama's arrow topples the crown from Ravana's head and he is put to shame. He sends for his brother Kumbhakarna, who is yet to wake up from his slumber. The battle for Lanka nears its climax.

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Controlling Editor:  
NAGI REDDI



Founder:  
CHAKRAPANI

## NATIONAL UNITY THROUGH FESTIVALS

Compared to the first half of the calendar year, the second half abounds in festivals in our country. Though quite a few of them have some association with *one religion or another*, the actual festivities transcend the boundaries of religion, with the result people join them in a display of friendship and in a spirit of unity.

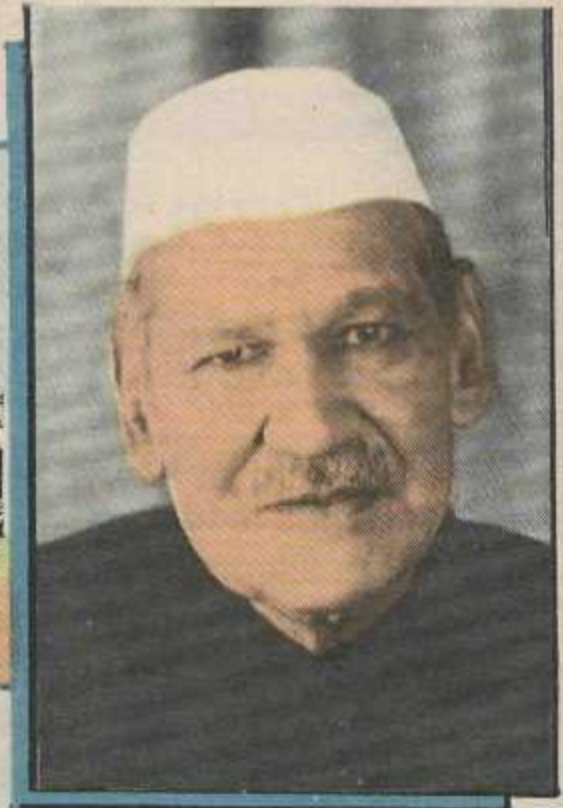
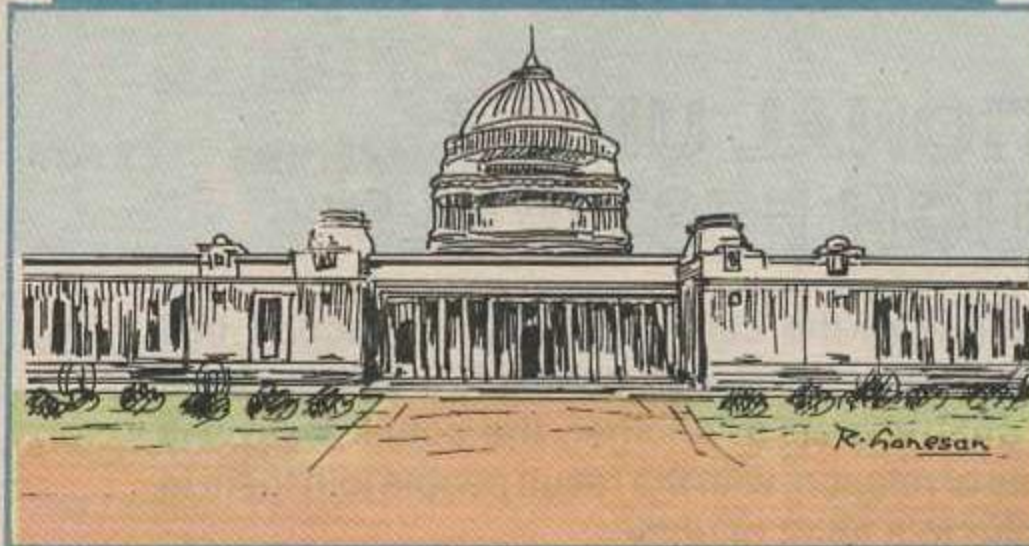
Festivals have that kind of universal appeal to attract people of different faiths. This takes off from the simple truth that when our neighbour has reasons for joy, he or she shares it with us. Similarly, when the neighbour suffers a set-back or a tragedy, we rush to express our regret and share that moment of sorrow and thereby take away its sting at least for the time being.

This spirit of being one with the neighbour is more evident during festivals, when people have a better understanding of each other. A non-Muslim may not enter a mosque to join the Id prayers, but he is very much there to greet his Muslim brethren. A non-Christian may not attend the Midnight Mass on Christmas Day, but he is not forgotten at the time of rejoicing. Similarly, a non-Hindu enjoys a Hindu festival in equal measure.

Festivals are thus slowly acquiring a universal appeal. Dussehra, Diwali, Christmas, Pongal, Holi, Bakr-id, Vishu, Baisakhi, Onam—to mention only a few—have all attained this status, paving the way for national unity. The month of August has ushered in a veritable 'procession' of festivals. Let's all forget our differences—whatever they be—and join this procession to share the moments of joy.



# India's New President



On July 25, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, who was till then the Vice-President of India, took over as the ninth President. He will hold that highest post in the country for five years.

The electoral college, comprising the people's representatives in the Parliament as well as the State Assemblies, would have done him a greater honour had he been elected unopposed. The Opposition parties urged the ruling Congress party to arrive at a consensus. However, the name of a common candidate eluded

them at the parleys, with the result there had to be a full-scale election. The line-up of parties behind the candidate put up by the Congress was such that everybody knew that the election was just a formality and Dr. Sharma would win hands down. And he won with a comfortable majority over Prof. G.G. Swell, who was the Opposition candidate. An equally distinguished person, Prof. Swell has one qualification — as belonging to one of the scheduled tribes — which the Opposition wanted to



project.

Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma was born in Bhopal in 1918. He took his Master's Degree in English and Law from Cambridge University in 1939. He joined Lucknow University as a Lecturer in the Law Faculty. After two years, he went back to Cambridge to teach Law as well as to take his Doctorate in Constitutional Law. He was also called to the Bar.

On returning to India, he set up his practice, but before long he was drawn into politics and joined the Indian National Congress. Soon, he headed the Bhopal Pradesh Congress Committee and later became the Chief Minister of the Bhopal State from 1952 till 1956, when it became part of the much bigger Madhya Pradesh. Politics was nothing new to him, as he had actively participated in the Quit India movement and was imprisoned several times.

From Bhopal, Dr. Sharma moved to the capital, becoming first a member of the Congress Working Committee and later its General Secretary. In 1971, he was elected to the Lok Sabha and

was made Minister of Communications in the Indira Gandhi Cabinet. In 1980, he was re-elected, but in 1984, he did not contest. However, as a consensus candidate, he became the Vice-President and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. In that capacity, he earned a reputation for impartiality.

Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma is essentially an academic man. He has authored several books and, at one time, edited important journals. He loves sports and enjoys music. He joins the band of scholar-Presidents India had, like Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Dr. Zakir Husain, and has been generally hailed as a leader whom people can depend on for fulfilling the aspirations of Indian democracy.

Soon after the oath-taking ceremony, Dr. Sharma invoked the blessings of the Almighty to dedicate himself "in the spirit of service for the proper fulfilment of my duties and responsibilities... for a better world, a better future, for all".

Chandamama greets the First Citizen and wishes him a meaningful innings.





# NO INSTANT REMEDY

Baidyanath was a well-known physician. He was very popular because his diagnosis was correct and his medicines effective. He used to engage youngsters as his assistants, who watched him deal with his patients and followed the treatment he would give them. They learnt many things from him.

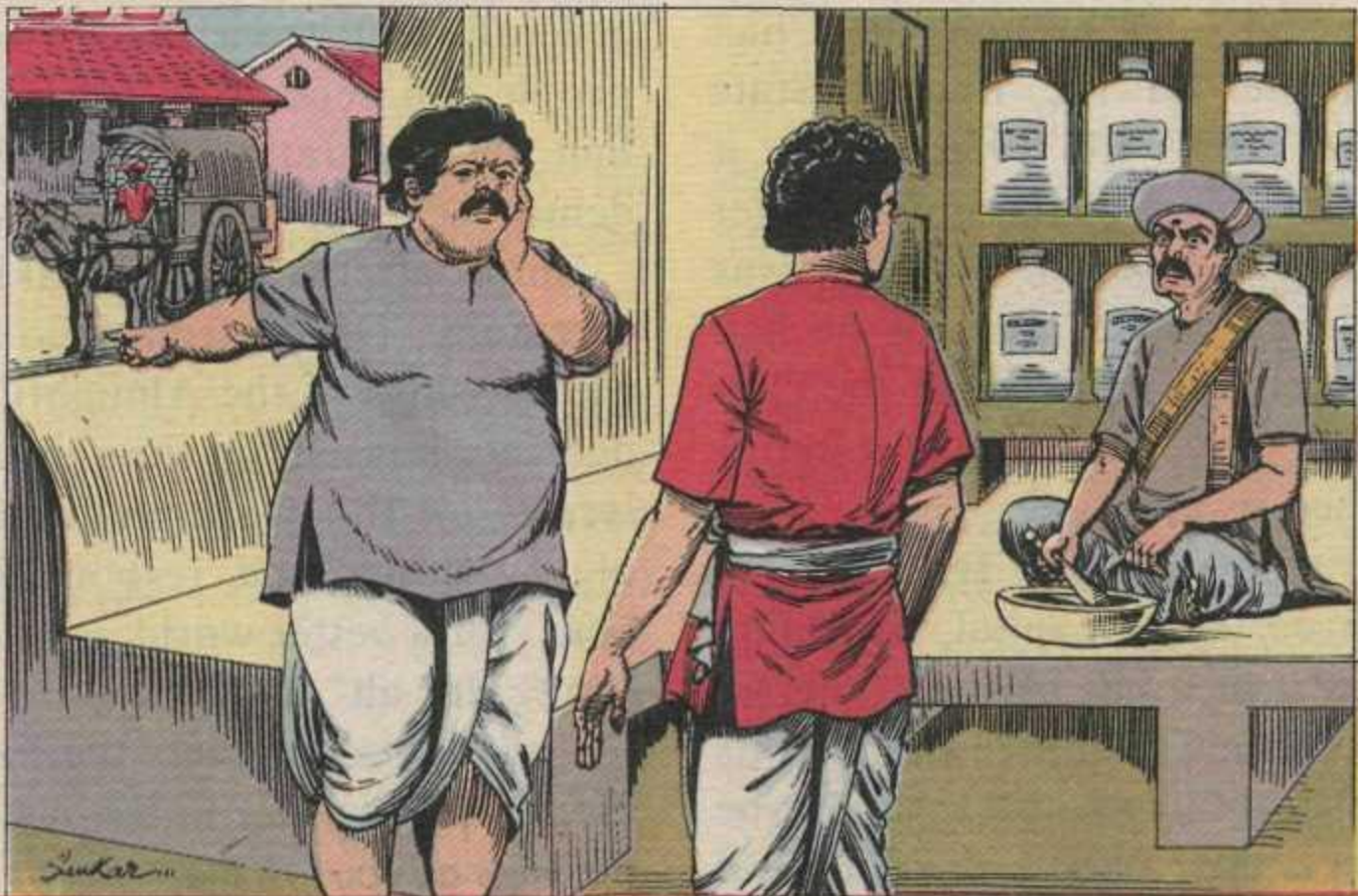
Jagdish was one such youngster. He was a keen student of Baidyanath and kept notes of his instructions and prescriptions. "There are certain ailments for which there are no known medicines," Baidyanath one day told Jagdish. "For instance, hiccup. There is no remedy, except perhaps a good blow on the cheek. The hiccup will stop because of the shock."

A day or two afterwards, a horse-cart arrived in front of the physician's house. A stout gentleman rushed inside. "Hiccup! Non-stop! Have you any medicine?"

Baidyanath was busy preparing some medicine. Jagdish was at hand. Without waiting for any instruction from his teacher, Jagdish aimed a blow on the man's cheek. "The hiccup will stop in no time," he added by way of explanation.

"Ah! I don't have hiccups. My brother in the cart has, and he needs attention!" cried the man, massaging his cheek.

After Baidyanath had attended to the patient himself he cautioned Jagdish, "No treatment should be done in a hurry."







## What's in a name?

China's population is 1,072 million. Of this, nearly 72 million people have the name Wang! How can one Wang be distinguished from another Wang? Single-syllable surnames have been a 2,000-year-old tradition in China. Efforts are now on to change it. How? By combining with a handful of popular names—like Wang-Jun or Wang-Zhang. As an experiment, 2,800 Wang-s of province Shandong changed their names—with not much success! The question now is, what will they do with 250 million other people who are named either Li, Liu, or Zhang?



## Blind on peak

Ten blind trekkers of Maharashtra went mountain-climbing in the Himalayan ranges. Three of them reached the 17,220 ft. Shitidhar Peak (Everest: 29,108 ft)—a unique feat, as this is the first time in the history of mountaineering that a blind person has scaled such a height. These "Friend Trekkers", including a deaf-and-dumb climber, had received special training at the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling.



## Youngest Graduate

Britain's youngest graduate is 13-year-old Ganesh Sittampalam, of Indian origin, who secured a First Class Honours degree in Mathematics from Surrey University in July. The previous record was with Ruth Lawrence, who was 13 years 7 months when she became a graduate. Ganesh, however, has no plans to continue specialising in mathematics. He will go back to school and be there till he is 16 to complete his GCSE (General Certificate in School Examination) and return to Surrey University later. He had appeared for the B.Sc. Maths examination just for the fun of it. How do you like that?



THE HUNTER AIMS AN ARROW.

THIS BOAR IS FATTY; I MUST GET IT



THE ARROW HITS THE BOAR



IN AGONY IT JUMPS ON THE HUNTER.

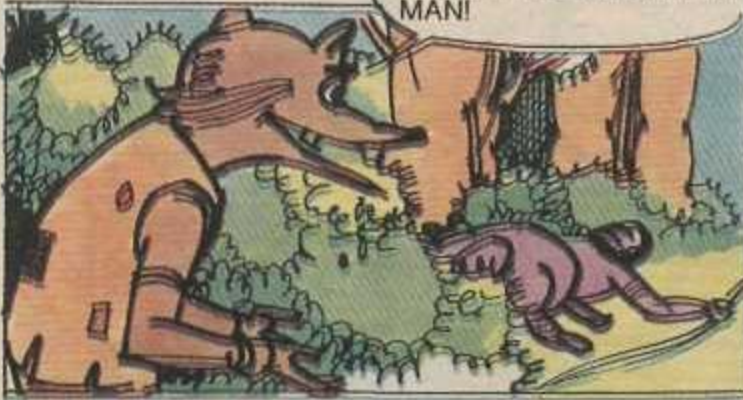


THE HUNTER AND THE BOAR THUS KILL EACH OTHER.



AT THIS MOMENT...

AH! TWO BIRDS IN ONE SHOT! A BOAR AND A MAN!



HOW LUCKY I AM ! GOD IS MERCIFUL! HE HAS GIVEN ME FOOD TO LAST MONTHS.



SURELY, IT'S THE FRUIT OF MY GOOD DEEDS IN THE PAST. THAT'S DESTINY.



I'LL EAT THIS FOOD SLOWLY; THEN IT'LL LAST LONGER.



THE GREEDY JACKAL BEGINS TO EAT THE BOW-STRING.



SUDDENLY THE STRING SNAPS AND HITS THE JACKAL. HE DIES.



THE BRAHMIN CONCLUDES THE STORY...

THAT'S HOW THE GREEDY JACKAL PERISHED.



सुजनो न याति वैरं परहितनिरतो विनाशकालेऽपि ।  
छेदेऽपि चन्दनतरुः सुरभयति मुखं कुठारस्य ॥



EVERY LIVING BEING HAS HIS FATE WRITTEN ON HIS FOREHEAD EVEN BEFORE HIS BIRTH.



HIS LIFE, WEALTH, FORTUNE, AND DATE OF DEATH, ARE ALL PRE-DETERMINED.



ALL RIGHT! I SHALL FEED A BRAHMIN.



THE BRAHMIN'S WIFE CLEANS A BOWL OF RICE FOR COOKING BUT A DOG EATS IT



WHAT A FATE!

THIS RICE IS DIRTY. LET ME EXCHANGE IT FOR PADDY.



SHE GOES TO A NEIGHBOUR...



WILL YOU TAKE THIS RICE AND GIVE ME PADDY IN EXCHANGE?



YES, WAIT.

I MADE A GOOD BARGAIN TODAY BY EXCHANGING PADDY FOR RICE.



WHAT!

YOU IDIOT! THAT CLEVER WOMAN HAS FOOLED YOU.



THERE MUST BE SOMETHING BAD ABOUT THE BARGAIN.



THROW AWAY THAT RICE, AT ONCE!



THE HOLY MAN CONCLUDES THE STORY...

CHUDA, EVERY ACTION HAS A REASON BEHIND IT.



IS IT SO?

A noble soul does not refrain from doing good to others even when he is himself being ruined. The sandal tree perfumes the edge of the very axe which fells it.





सुवर्णपुष्पितां पृथ्वीं चिन्वन्ति पुरुषास्त्रयः ।  
शूरश्च कृतविद्यश्च यश्च जानाति सेवितुम् ॥







To Continue

The earth flowers with gold for three kinds of people to pluck them : the valiant, the learned, and one who knows how to serve.







## MAN AND NATURE

Can man ever think of himself as separate from Nature? We are made of five elements of Nature: earth, air, water, fire, and ether. That is why the ancients saw the presence of different gods behind these things and worshipped them.

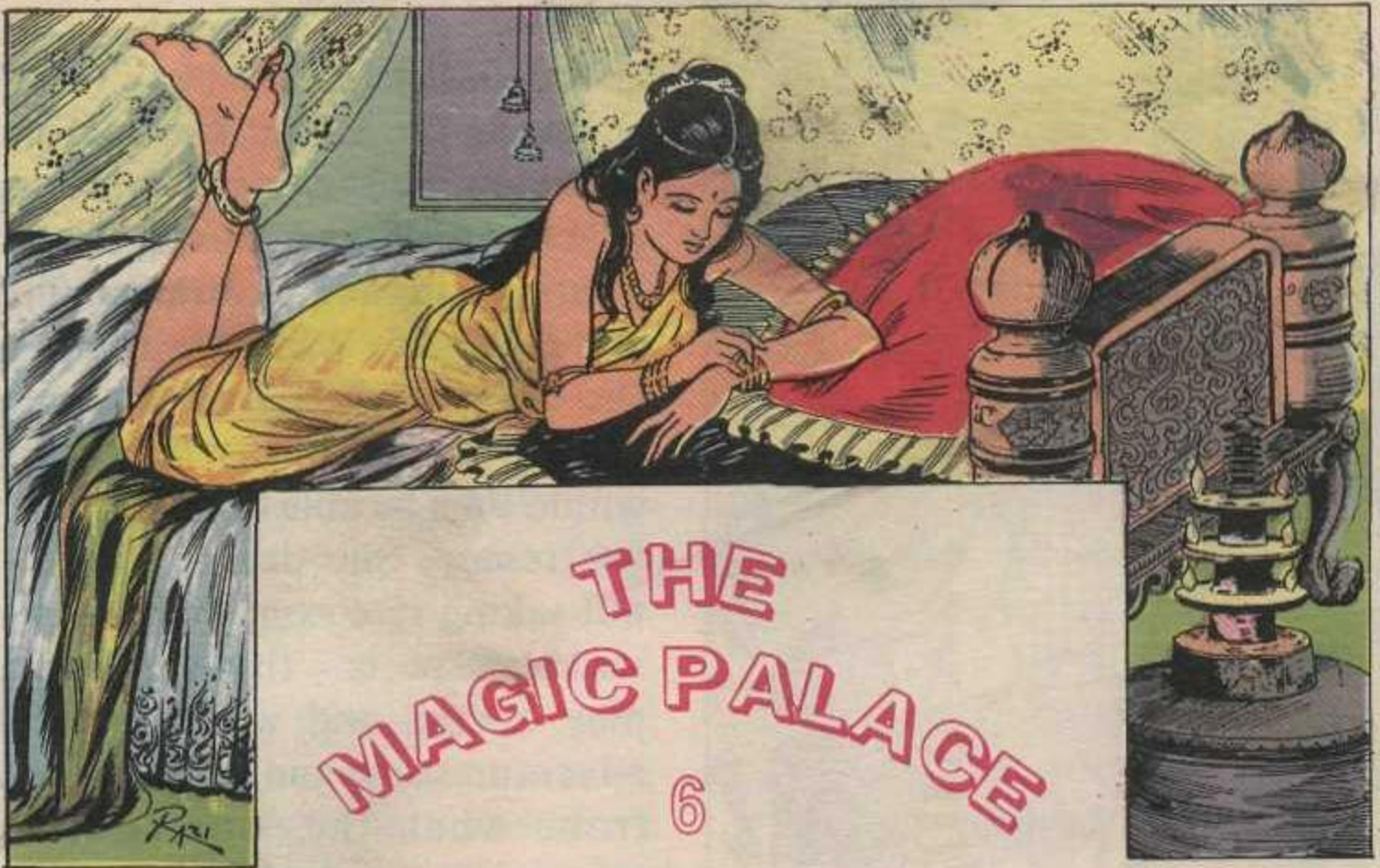
The ancients also believed that there is one great consciousness inherent in everything—from matter to man. Of course, its manifestation is not the same in every object. In matters like the rock or the sands or the water, the consciousness lies asleep. In the trees, the consciousness is only half-awake. In the animals and birds it is more active. But in man it is much more active.

Because of this superiority of man over everything else on the earth, he is expected to act in a responsible way. Man has emerged from Nature, he depends for his survival on Nature. That is why he should deal with Nature with love and respect.

But does he do so? Unfortunately, the answer is 'No'. His relation with Nature was all right for thousands of years. But in the recent past, man has been very unkind towards Nature. He has polluted air and water; he has destroyed forests and hills; he has done so many other harmful things. In doing all this, he has only been the loser. Man's existence is in danger today. The future generations will very much suffer for what man has done to Nature till now.

Better late than never. We should realise this—and each one of us must contribute our best to preserve Nature. In this column, we will discuss the different aspects of our relationship with Nature and what we can do to keep that relationship healthy.





*(Surprises are in store for Princess Vidyavati at the Magic Palace, where she has been removed from the lake resort on the pretext of being taken to her ailing father, King Veerasen of Veergiri. Though she is looked after very well and all her needs are met, she has little or no freedom even to talk to her maids. And there are enough hints and suggestions to put her on the alert...)*

The long midnight journey by palanquin, the pre-dawn arrival at a strange place, and the presence of an overbearing woman, if not impersonating, almost looking like old Kamala back at the lake palace—all this led Princess Vidyavati to conclude that she had been cleverly kidnapped. It was an imposing

building she had been taken to, though she could not see much of the details in the semi-darkness that greeted her arrival. As she walked through the passages inside and climbed the stairs to a room, she noticed that everything was marked by grandeur.

The moment Vidyavati entered the room, the woman





calling herself Kamala, ordered her to get into bed as she had been disturbed in her sleep and she needed rest before everything else. True, the princess was feeling tired and she unhesitatingly lay down.

Though tired, the princess did not go to sleep immediately. She once again recollected all that had happened after she was woken up and told that her father had taken ill and wished to see her. Evidently, it was just a ruse to get her out of the island resort. But who would have wanted to play such a trick on her? Some

enemy of her father?

But as far as she knew, King Veerasen had enjoyed a long, peaceful rule and all the neighbouring kingdoms were friendly with Veergiri. Whatever that be, she only wished that nothing should happen to her father; he would then be able to arrange for her rescue. She decided—without taking into consideration its various aspects—that she would play it cool and would not be adventuresome and try to escape from what the woman had referred to it as the Magic Palace. She were to realise its significance in the next few days.

Vidyavati was not aware of the presence of the old lady in the room in the morning as she did not hear the door being opened. She woke up when someone shook her by the shoulders. There was plenty of sunlight in the room, indicating that the time was well past morning. “I hope you’ve had a good sleep,” said the woman.

“Yes,” Vidyavati responded simply, not wishing to prolong the conversation. “I think I’ll go for a bath straight away.” Right then she wanted time to compose





her thoughts and so wished to be left to herself. In the bathroom, she found that whatever clothes she would need had been neatly laid out. When she came out, she found two maids dressed in identical clothes.

It was then that she really noticed that the room was full of mirrors, from the floor level almost to the ceiling. The walls otherwise were bare. The two large windows gave a good view of the garden outside.

The old lady, who was still in the room, introduced the maids to her. "This is Mala, and she is Neela. They'll help you dress up and then serve your breakfast. They will be with you; if you need anything, you may tell them."

"But *you* will be here, won't you?" said Vidyavati.

"Well, I may be here; I may also not be," replied Kamala, sounding mysterious. "I would advise you to avoid asking questions—not even to these girls," the lady cautioned her further.

After breakfast, the princess sat by the window for some time, while the two girls busied themselves by filling the flower vases, re-arranging the curios and arte-

facts on the table and in the corners, and making up Vidyavati's bed. They gave her no opportunity to engage them in conversation. Whenever they moved in the room, from one corner to another, their images got reflected in the several mirrors on the walls, creating an eerie sight. Vidyavati curiously watched this till she thought the moving images were hurting her eyes. She would then turn to the window and look at the garden.

Mala and Neela were not only wearing the same kind of dress that Vidyavati herself wore, but they also very much resembled the princess in appearance. Vidyavati feared she might call their names wrongly and so carefully avoided calling them at all. She was never alone; at least one of the maids remained with her always. Till evening, Kamala did not make her appearance.

One of the maids brought lunch for Vidyavati and she ate in silence. After lunch, even before the suggestion came from any of the maids, Vidyavati got into the bed, while the maids took turns in keeping her company in the room. Vidyavati merely closed







her eyes but remained alert for any unusual movements in the room. Everything was quiet, till Kamala came into the room, saying, "Princess, I shall take you out for a stroll in the garden."

Vidyavati got up and went out with Kamala. As they walked through the passage and climbed down the staircase, what struck Vidyavati was the use of mirrors in ornamental frames everywhere. No space had been left on the walls without a mirror. They were of different shapes and sizes. As they walked, their images were reflected.

The stroll in the garden was very refreshing and Vidyavati enjoyed it very much. Kamala, too, walked with her for some time; later she sat on a bench in the garden, keeping an eye on Vidyavati, lest she ventured beyond the garden on her own. Just before it got dark, she was guided back to the palace. Somehow, she got the uncanny feeling that they had gone past the bed-room.

Kamala pushed open a door and Vidyavati was led into a room which looked exactly like the one in which she had spent the day. However, in the twinkling of an eye, the princess noticed that some of the artefacts in the room were different from what she had seen earlier. Might be they had been replaced by the maids, she presumed. When they came with her dinner, Vidyavati was about to ask them about the curios, but discreetly desisted as she did not want to give them any impression that she had noticed the changes.

Vidyavati's doubts were confirmed the next morning when she woke up and looked through the window. She saw another part of the garden! The plants





were different, the flowers were different, too. She knew that she was in a different room. She went for her bath and found the clothes she was expected to wear neatly laid out.

When she came out, Kamala and two maids were already in the room. Surekha and Sulekha were introduced to her. Today Vidyavati was not surprised when she saw the maids in the same kind of dress that she herself wore. And both of them not only looked like twins but resembled her very much. Soon afterwards Kamala went away leaving the maids with the princess and giving them some instructions.

She waited till she was alone with one of the maids.

"Surekha, may I ask you something?" she accosted her.

"I'm Sulekha, princess," the maid replied. "Would you like a drink or something?"

"No, I don't want any drink. Have you been here for long?" the princess asked a seemingly innocent question, watching the girl's face for any reaction.

"Not very long, princess," said Sulekha, "may be a month or a month-and-a-half."



"Where were you before that?" asked Vidyavati.

"At home, princess," replied the maid.

"I like you very much. Will you go with me when I return to my palace?" the princess worded her query very carefully.

"*This* is your palace, princess," said the girl. "You'll stay here as long as Master desires. He may later take you away with him. I don't know where and when."

"Oh! I see!" Vidyavati left it at that, hoping that her questions might not provoke Sulekha to repeat their conversation to







Kamala later in the day. Fortunately for her, the maids did not get an opportunity to talk to each other till it was noon. After lunch, one of them remained in the room, while the princess got into the bed for a nap. She guessed that the girl could be Surekha, though she was not very certain. Vidyavati did not go to sleep straight away; she put up the pillows against the back rest, and leaned against them, giving the impression that she was not yet ready for a nap. When she found the maid not doing anything in particular, she ventured

ask her, "Sulekha, come and sit on my bed, I want to ask you something," deliberately calling her by the wrong name.

"Princess, I'm Surekha," said the girl, waiting for the question from Vidyavati.

"You both look so alike, I get confused with your names," said the princess. "You must be twins, if I'm not mistaken."

"No, princess, we're not twins," Surekha replied, "we aren't even sisters."

"How long have you been here?" the princess asked a straight question.

"Perhaps a month; may be two," said the maid.

"You both seem to be all alone here, except for Kamala, in this huge palace," remarked Vidyavati, expecting a helpful response.

"Yesterday Mala and Neela were on duty; today we were asked to be with you. I don't know who'll be on duty tomorrow, or the day after, or the day..." explained Surekha. "There are quite a few girls here; I don't think I've seen all of them, nor do I know their names."

"Aren't there any menfolk





here? Your Master?" the princess asked rather casually.

"Oh! Men? I haven't seen anybody in these parts," answered the maid. "I'm told they've separate apartments and they don't come to the women's section. Master is seldom here. Anyway I haven't seen him for once. Princess, you must rest now." Surekha helped Vidyavati to lower the pillows and, after covering her with a silken sheet, she moved to a chair near the window.

By the time Vidyavati woke up, Kamala was ready there to escort her to the garden. The princess wondered why she was not allowing any of the maids to give her company in the garden and why Kamala insisted on her presence at that time. Moreover, the lady was carefully avoiding

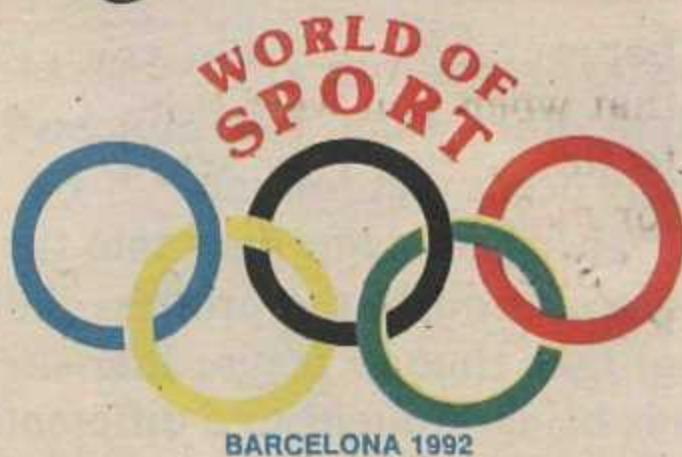
being drawn into any conversation other than the princess's daily needs and routine.

When they came back into the palace at dusk, the princess did not take time to realise that she was being brought to a different room. The next morning, the names of the maids were mentioned as Malini and Shalini. Vidyavati was reminded of her own maids-in-waiting at her palace. They appeared in a dress similar to the one that was kept for her own use. The princess surmised that whoever had kidnapped her had taken all precautions to prevent anybody from easily recognising her or indentifying her. Then and there she decided that she would employ some ingenuity as and when the situation warranted.

**—To continue**







## BRIEFINGS FROM BARCELONA

By the time we go to press, the 25th Olympic Games in Barcelona is just about a week old. So, this issue will carry only some sidelights which you might have missed in the excitement of watching the "action" on your TV or reading about it in your newspaper. Till such a time as we can wrap up the Games with its highlights (and a few sidelights, too), here we go!

### Cobi: Who, what, how?

Meet Cobi, the mascot of the Barcelona Games. You cannot miss him where the action is. For that matter, he is everywhere—a modern version of the Omnipresent, so to say! Just think. He would not have been born if his creator, Javier Mariscal, had been satisfied with the shrimp that he drew first or the sheep dog that appeared later on his drawing board. He was doodling when one of his doodles assumed the shape of a cubist cartoon dog. Mariscal was quite happy and he adapted "the cockeyed pooch with the sly grin" for all the 28 Olympic sports, from archery to yachting. He was "made to" drink coke, wear sunglasses, bang at a typewriter,



sport a stethoscope, wear a professor's gown, or salute as a bellboy in a hotel lobby. Mariscal was certain that the mascot would be noticed. The Barcelona Olympic Organizing Committee approved of the design and the model Mariscal had prepared. COBI got his name from the Spanish acronym of the Committee: COOB! Mariscal took days to doodle the dog, he says any child can draw him in four seconds flat. Try. Just to refresh your memory: Sam the eagle was the mascot of the Los Angeles Games (1984) and Hodori the tiger of Seoul Games (1988).



### Arena: Main to many

Any sports enthusiast who made a beeline for Barcelona must have been baffled when he was told that if he wished to watch the entire Games, he would have to be present at 42 different venues—some of them at the same time. He might have tried to invoke the blessings of the Almighty to make him another Omnipresent for the duration of the Games! Only 13 of the 28 disciplines are to be held at the four main arenas around the city. All the others are to be conducted in locations away from the town. The main Montjuic Stadium, where the opening ceremony was held on July 25,

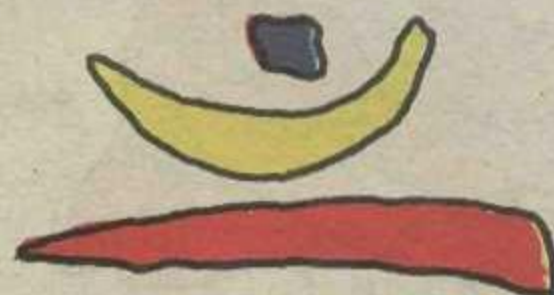


was built out of something resembling a Roman arena (remember the Gladiators? Androcles and the Lion?) constructed for the 1929 World Fair. At the foot of the Montjuic Hill is located the Press centre for journalists, from where the world will know of the progress of the Games in every minute detail.



### **Carl Lewis: A repeat performance?**

Carl Lewis of the U.S.A., one-time 100m World record holder, will not be seen in action in that event! For, in the pre-Olympic trials, he failed to qualify for the sprint event. He had earlier decided to skip the 200m dash, as the two events were scheduled close to each other. That left him with long jump and 4 x 100m relay. Remember, he was at his perfect best at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics when he won golds in 100m, 200m, long jump, and the relay—thus duplicating the great feat of the U.S.A.'s Jesse Owens way back in the 1936 Berlin Games. In 1988, at Seoul he won golds in 100m and long jump and was



hoping to repeat his Los Angeles performance at Barcelona. All eyes are now on this greatest athlete of the post-War half-century.

### **Carlos: The babe of Barcelona**

At 11, Carlos Bienvendio Front Barrera is the youngest participant in the Barcelona Games. He will be the cox of the Spanish rowing eight. He weighs 47 kg and faces the prospect of retiring from coxing because of over-weight—possibly next year itself. Whether he wins a gold or not, he will be very much mentioned in the record books. The youngest gold medallist in Olympic records is a French boy—name not mentioned—who was between 7 and 10 years, and who coxed the winning Dutch rowing team at the Paris Games in 1900.

### **On Foot: Bucharest to Barcelona**

He was a competitive walker when he was young. Though retired from sports, Ion Nelescu has enough mettle in him despite the 58 summers and winters gone by. This former chemical engineer sportingly walked 3,300 km from the Romanian capital for 95 days to reach the Games venue. "It is better to take part in life rather than stay at home and do nothing," is his advice to takers?





**TALES FROM MANY LANDS  
(NORWAY)**

## **A PIECE OF SILVER**

winding path to the forest. He was happy in spite of the chill grey weather and continued to jump and run in order to keep himself warm. Soon he came to the woods and gathered as much fuel as his little arms could carry and started back home. Suddenly he stumbled against a big round stone, all white with frost and snow.

"How pale and white you look! You'll be soon frozen to death!" he said and, taking off his coat, laid it on the stone.

When he got home with the bundle of twigs under his arm and his mother asked him what he did with his coat, he proudly told her what he had done with it.

"What! You wrapped it round a lifeless stone to keep it warm? What a fool you're! Don't you know that whether it's hot or cold, a stone remains a stone, always dumb and still. Now, go

Once upon a time, there lived in a small hamlet a poor woman and her son. So poor were they that often there was not even a morsel of food in their tumble-down hut.

It was a cold winter day and they had nothing at all to light a fire and warm themselves by.

"Son, will you go to the woods and fetch some dry twigs for fuel? Otherwise, we will freeze to death," said the mother, covering her little boy with an old patched-up coat.

Fred hopped and skipped, skipped and hopped all along the





and fetch your coat at once," said his mother angrily.

But when Fred was once again near the stone, he saw an unusual sight. The stone had lifted itself up on one side from the ground. "Well, mister, is this to tell me that you're quite happy and warm in my coat? Alas, I've come to take it back!" he said innocently.

But when he looked closer, lo and behold, under it lay a box full of shining silver pieces. 'This is surely stolen property. For no one will put money earned through honest means, under a stone deep in the woods,' thought the lad quite logically.

He threw the whole box along with its content into a small lake nearby. But one bright silver penny floated on the water.

'Ah! That's no doubt honest, for what is honest never sinks,' said the boy to himself.

So, picking up the silver penny and forgetting his coat, Fred gambolled back home. Excited, he recounted his adventures to his mother in one long breath. "And," he concluded, holding out his hand and opening his palm, "this is the honest penny."



"What a foolish boy you're! What does it matter if the silver pieces were stolen? You had after all found it! Had you only brought the box home, how well and happily we could have lived all our days. Now, begone and earn your own bread! I can no longer toil for you," chided the woman very loudly.

Little Fred very obediently set out into the wide, wide world. For many days and nights he travelled, whistling all the way. Sometimes he felt very cold indeed, but was happy with the thought that his only coat still







warmed the white round stone far away in the woods.

At last he was in a town. He got work in a rich merchant's stable. Soon his master had to make a journey into distant lands. He asked his servants, one by one, what he should bring home for them. When it was Fred's turn, holding out the bright silver piece he said, "Master, this penny is truly honest, get me what you can buy for it."

"What will this tiny silver piece fetch you? Perhaps nothing more than two green peas!" laughed the merchant. Nevertheless he

gave his word to the lad that he would surely keep his wish.

So, he sailed away in his ship and unloaded and loaded it in many lands across the seas. He got all that he had promised his men at home. He was about to set sail homeward when he suddenly remembered his stable-boy, and his words rang in his ears, "Master this penny is truly honest, get me what you can buy for it."

"Is it worth taking the trouble to go all the way to the town for the sake of a silver penny?" As the merchant was thus thinking, an old woman came walking by, with a bag on her hunchback.

"Grandma, what is it that you're carrying in your bag?" asked the merchant.

"Just a cat, Sir. I can't afford to feed it any longer. So I thought I would rather throw it in the sea than let it perish of hunger," replied the lady.

"Will you part with it in exchange of a silver farthing?" he asked, rather whimsically.

"Gladly, too gladly!" exclaimed the old hag and handing over the bag and almost snatching away the silver penny,





she disappeared into the mist.

The ship had not sailed very far when it fell into a fearful weather. A terrible storm drove it to the shores of an unknown land.

It was a tiny realm where the merchant had never set his foot before. As he walked into it, he was greeted not by men but by thousands of mice. Big and small, fat and thin, black and white, and pink and brown. "Friend," he asked a passer-by, "whom does this country belong to, mice or men?"

"It does belong to men. But for many years, the mice seem to have taken it over. We have not had a proper meal nor a peaceful sleep for a long time. By the time the spoon reaches the mouth, the food disappears both from the spoon and the plate below. At night, sometimes we manage to get just a wink of sleep and dream of mice and mice only," said the man with a big yawn.

"Don't you keep cats here?" enquired the traveller.

"Ca..aats! What are they?"

So, the merchant fetched the cat he had bought for the stable-boy. The moment the mice smelled it, they all scampered



away in fright and dived into the sea. The cat ran after them and managed to gobble up a few.

The old king was so overjoyed to know that at last his land was free of the menace that was bothering it for so many years, that he at once proposed to retire and crown the great saviour as the king and give him his daughter's hand in marriage.

The merchant set sail loaded with royal gifts, with the promise that he would soon return to wed the princess and take charge of the kingdom.

Standing on the deck, he





jubilantly shouted into the sea, "Soon I shall be a king! Ha! Ha! Ha!" He had just finished proudly beating his breast when a terrible gale broke out. It battered the ship which was almost on the point of sinking.

It made him think: was it not the poor stable-boy who should be the rightful ruler of the kingdom?

He had but thought this when the weather turned fair. He soon reached the shores of his hometown. He straight went to his stable-boy and said, "Dear friend, your honest penny has not only earned you the crown of a kingdom but also the hand of a beautiful princess."

So, before long, Fred, who had by now grown into a fine young man, became the king and took

the princess as his bride. But he did not forget to fetch his old mother and looked after her with much love and affection.

"Forgive me, dear son," she said to Fred with tearful eyes, "indeed, the white round stone must have surely felt warm under your coat. Perhaps it is not dead as it seems to be. It has some life in it, isn't?"

"Yes indeed," replied King Fred, "and the silver penny, wasn't it truly honest?"

So, for many many happy years, Fred ruled the kingdom. The merchant joined him as his close friend and adviser. The people ate and slept peacefully ever after. For, the great cat, with its tail curled up, always patrolled the cobbled streets!

**Retold by Anup Kishore Das**





# CHANDAMAMA

## SUPPLEMENT-47



BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF INDIA

### THE TALL STORK

The stork is a bird commonly seen all over the world. 'A visit from the stork' is a popular expression, referring to the impending birth of a baby, which is pictured as being brought by a flying stork by its bill in a cloth wrapper.

Among storks, both the African boatbill and the adjutant stork of the Asiatic region are migratory birds seen in India; however, the one resident in India is the black-necked stork. Reaching almost the height of man, it is among the tallest of the storks. This lanky bird has a pair of rather long red legs, a long black bill, and a long thick neck which has a metallic sheen of blue-green. Below it is pure white, with the top a shining black. When in flight, the broad white wings with a black band across their middle make an impressive sight.

This bird is generally seen alone or at the most as a pair, but seldom in flock. Beyond some grunts, the bird is incapable of making any recognisable sounds. It gets into shallow water or marshy flats to hunt for fish, frogs, and small reptiles. This bird is a rare sight in south India, though many of them can be seen in the north-east and north-west.



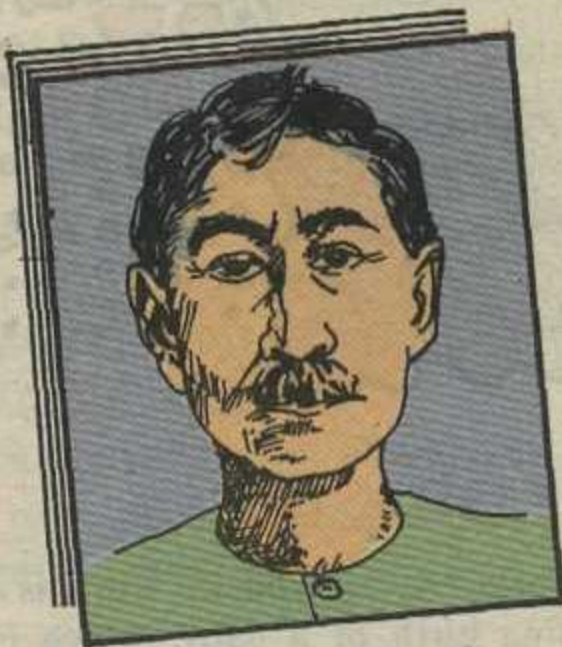


# INDIA THROUGH HER LITERATURE

*India is a great country which has nurtured so many languages and so many cultures through the ages. Each major language of India has a rich literature. We know more or less about the great books of the past. But we know little about the outstanding books of our own time. In these pages, Chandamama will tell you the stories of the novels of our age, written in different Indian languages. The narration will be very brief, but we hope, this will inspire our readers to read the full book in original or in translation in the future.*

— Editor

## PREMCHAND'S GODAN



Hori Ram, a farmer living in village Belari in Ayodhya, desired to own a cow, but he had no money to buy one. Another poor villager, Bhola, who had lost his wife and wanted to marry again, offered him a cow, so that he would help him find a bride. It was enough if Hori Ram gave him some fodder for his cattle now and paid the full price of the cow later.

The cow came from Bhola's house to Hori's house, but along with that came problems, too. Gobar, Hori's son, who went to fetch the cow, came in close contact with Bhola's widowed daughter, Jhuniya, and secretly married her. The cow aroused envy in Hori Ram's step-brother, Hira, who had separated from him. Hira secretly poisoned the cow, but his mischief was found out. In fear of punishment, he fled the village.

Soon, the affair of Gobar and Jhuniya became known. Marrying a widow, that too without the knowledge of the parents, was considered a sin. Hori Ram's wife, Dhaniya, however took great pity on Jhuniya and gave her shelter in her house. Gobar left for Lucknow. But Bhola, Jhuniya's father, would not pardon his daughter's sin. He would like Hori Ram to drive her out of his house. But Hori Ram refused to do so.





Angry, Bhola demanded money for the dead cow. As Hori Ram could not pay, Bhola led Hori Ram's bullocks away.

In the city, Gobar earned well and returned to his village after some time. The villagers were impressed with him. Bhola returned Hori Ram's bullocks.

Jhuniya went to the city to live with her husband, Gobar. But she found the life in the city most unattractive. Her first child died.

Gobar worked in a factory, but at the end of the day, would drink and harass Jhuniya. There was a strike in the factory. In a clash between two groups of workers, Gobar was badly beaten up. Jhuniya nursed him back to health. That changed Gobar's attitude towards her. Things once again began to improve for Gobar. His second child was looked after by a social worker, Dr. Malti, in whose garden Gobar worked as a gardener.

In the village, however, Hori Ram's life was full of struggle. He had taken loans for his first daughter's marriage. He was obliged to marry his second daughter, Rupa, off to a wealthy widower, much older than her. Rupa, of course, did not resent it. She was happy with her new-found riches and even sent a cow to her father.

But the father, by then exhausted with hard labour in a quarry, was dying. However, he had some satisfaction before his death. His brother Hira, haunted by the vision of the cow he had killed, had returned to apologise to him. His grandson, Gobar's second child, also brought him joy.

As he was dying, Hira asked Dhaniya, his sister-in-law, to make a *godan*—the gift (dan) of a cow (go)—so that his soul would be in peace. But all that Dhaniya had was a couple of coins. She placed them in the cold palm of her husband's hand and told a Brahmin to accept it from the dead man and said, "This is his *godan*!" Then she fell unconscious.

This is the main plot, but the novel has many interesting sub-plots, narrating the woes of the poor—as well as of the rich—and exposing the hypocrisy of ambitious people. Village life comes most alive.

Premchand, the author of this immortal classic in Hindi literature, was born near in Varanasi 1880. He studied Urdu and Persian and first wrote in Urdu. He died in 1936, acknowledged as a pioneer in modern Indian fiction.





# DO YOU KNOW?

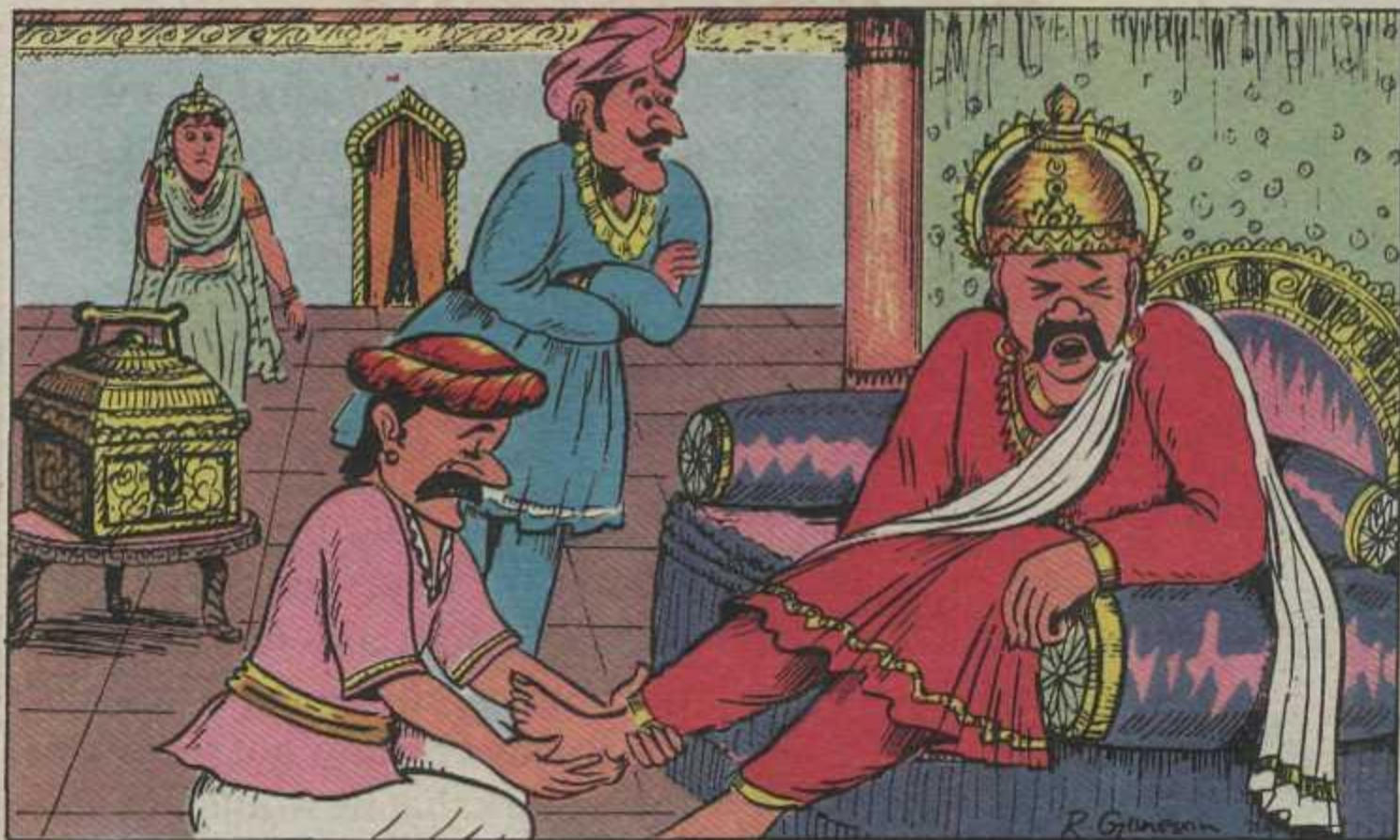
1. In which language did the 15th century Vaishnava poet, Vidyapati, write?
2. What is the name given to the groves where *rishis* and *munis* meditated?
3. A *rishi* is believed to have swallowed the turbulent Ganga and released her through his ear. The river also acquired a new name. Which *rishi* was it? What was the name?
4. Who did Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri go to meet in Tashkent in 1966?
5. Which southern king defeated Harsh Vardhana at Thaneshwar-Kanauj?
6. Who is the first Indian architect to be mentioned in writing as early as 5th century B.C.?
7. A wily snake king was saved from Janamejaya's sacrificial fire, as described in the *Mahabharata*. What is the name of the snake?
8. The Parsees observe six seasons, each with a Thanksgiving festival. What are these festivals called?
9. For which game are the Ekalavya and Rani Lakshmi Awards given?
10. Which train in India runs through the most number of States?
11. What is the greatest contribution to the world for which Tellicherry in north Kerala is famous?
12. The Farakka Barrage—the largest of its kind in India—was built for a specific purpose. What?
13. The Ajanta paintings are called murals. What is the significance?
14. Sriperumbudur, where Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated, is the birthplace of a famous saint. Who?
15. Which is the most famous of all the temples dedicated to Lord Siva as Nataraja?

## ANSWERS

1. Briholl
2. Tapovan.
3. Jahnū—Jahnavi.
4. President Ayub Khan of Pakistan.
5. Pulakesi II.
6. Mahagovinda—in *Dharmapada*.
7. Takshaka.
8. The Gahambars.
9. Kho-Kho.
10. The Himagiri Express, between Kanyakumari and Jammu, runs through nine States—Tamilnadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, the Union Territory of Delhi, and Jammu & Kashmir.
11. Tellicherry saw the birth of circus in India and subsequently a great many number of circus artistes came from that town.
12. To provide navigable depths to Calcutta port.
13. The paintings have been done on walls.
14. Saint Ramanuja.
15. The temple at Chidambaram.







## THE LIGHTER SIDE

# The Missing Thumb

Illness and disease never discriminate between the rich and the poor. Even kings and emperors fall ill. They may have everything good in life, yet they will not be able to ward off a disease when it catches them. Sometimes it may also be for their good! A person who held such a view was Poornendu Rao, the minister of Raja Yadavendra Rai of Yadugiri.

The Raja took a fancy for

hunting and he would often go on adventure trips. One day, he was returning from the jungle when it had become quite dark. His men led the way holding torches, but at a place where there was a lot of undergrowth, he could not properly see where he was stepping. He hit a stump and fell down, writhing in pain.

The men heard the cry that escaped his lips and they hurried to his rescue. They lifted him up:







luckily he had not sustained any grievous injury. But they found he was unable to walk even one step. There was acute pain on his leg, especially on the foot. So, they made a makeshift stretcher and carried him slowly, lest the leg moved and the pain increased.

On reaching the palace, he sent for his minister besides the court physician. While the doctor examined him thoroughly and prescribed massage and medicines, the minister was heard mumbling, "All for your good!" The Raja took it as an expression

of pity and sympathy; his minister must have meant that the enforced rest till he recouped would do him good.

His treatment continued under the supervision of the court physician. Whenever Poornendu called on the Raja to discuss state affairs, he would find an opportunity to refer to the Raja's bandaged foot and remark, "All for your good." King Yadavendra Rai had by now got so used to the remark that he would not give it any importance.

It took a little over a month for the swelling on the leg to subside, for the pain to ease, and for the Raja to walk without aid. However, as he had spent most of the time lying in bed, his stomach got bloated up and every now and then he suffered stomach-ache. Now the treatment had to be modified, and the court physician once again advised complete rest, and some medicines, besides restrictions in the food that the Raja ate. "All for your good, sire!" said Poornendu Rao, putting out a solemn face.

"I hope to be all right soon, Poornendu." responded the Raja. "You may carry on; you



don't have to see me unless there is something very important." The Raja, evidently, was getting fed up with his minister's remark and found an easy way of keeping him away from the palace! Poor Poornendu! He did not understand the import of the Raja's instructions. Anyway, he did not bother him with frequent visits, nor irritate him by his unsolicited remark.

By the time Yadavendra Rai was cured of his stomach-ache, he was ready for the court physician with another unexpected ailment. At first the Raja did not notice it or he might have deliberately avoided mentioning it to anyone. But when the swelling on the right thumb was increasing and it was causing unbearable pain, he decided he would disclose it to the court physician in confidence, not wanting to scare many people, his minister the least.

The court physician took a good look at the thumb, and pressed it between his fingers in the course of his examination. The Raja gave out one yell and it brought several of his attendants into the bed chamber. One of



them rushed to the queen, and before she hurried to the king's chamber, she sent her own attendant to call Poornendu to the palace.

Queen Aishwarya was beside Yadavendra Rai to hear the court physician spell out the only remedy—cut the finger, as there was a lot of puss, the nail had been affected, and the swelling might recur, even if the puss were to be taken out. The court physician, however, assured the Raja that he would get back his health provided the root cause of the puss was removed.





By the time Poornendu Rao reached the palace, the court physician had left, to make preparations for the minor amputation to be done on the king. The minister bowed to the Raja and the queen; the deadly silence that greeted him was enough to tell him that the situation was serious, if not grave.

Queen Aishwarya gave him all the details, and Poornendu Rao listened to her carefully. "All for your good, sire!" The minister could not help making his remark.

Now that the court physician

had promised to restore his health after the amputation, the Raja ought to have taken his minister's remark as a wish for his complete recovery. But Yadvendra Rai, right at that moment, was not in a mood to accept any wish, however much sincere it was.

He flew at his minister. "What do you mean by saying it is good for me, Poornendu? At this rate, if my head were to be cut, you would still say it is all for my good. I now know how insincere you are; you must be conspiring behind my back. I can't brook it any more. And *I* know what is





good for *you*! Who's there to tie this wretched fellow?" the Raja shouted for his attendants.

Two or three of them rushed in from different directions. "Tie him up, and throw him into the prison!" he commanded. "I shall get rid of my thumb as well as this pain in the neck!"

Poornendu Rao heard the Raja's angry words as he was being escorted out of the king's chambers by the palace guards. "All for his good," he consoled himself loudly.

The amputation was done the next day. It was quite a painful operation, but to his great relief, the Raja found that the thumb was not paining. That was before he fully realised that the thumb had been removed.

Just as the court physician had anticipated and also assured the king, Yadavendra Rai regained his health and felt that he could now resume his adventures into the jungle. Again, on a fateful evening, he got separated from his party and he wandered without finding a way out of the jungle. He was feeling both thirsty and hungry and in the moonlight spotted a little brook

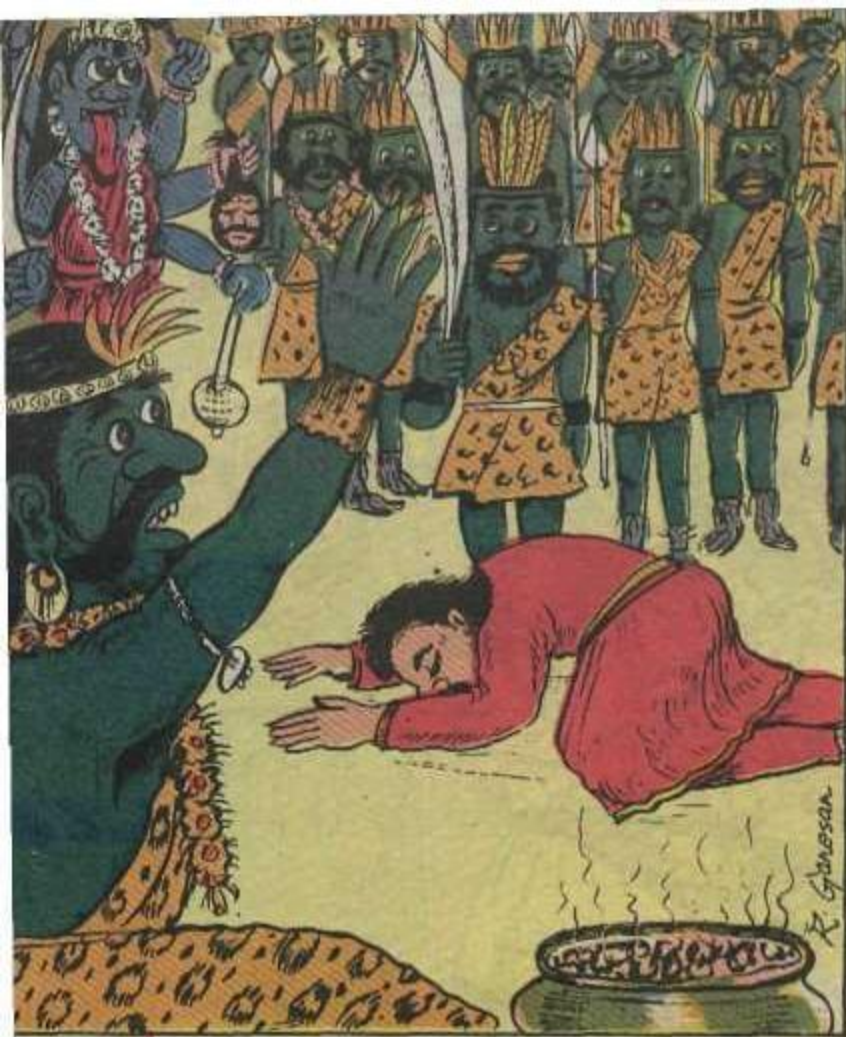


where he quenched his thirst and went and lay down beneath a tree. Soon he slept.

While he slept there, a group of tribals came that way. They were happy to see a handsome man who could be readily sacrificed at the altar of their jungle goddess. In fact, they were in search of a possible victim, when they found Yadavendra Rai lying across their path. They first gagged him, tied him on to a strong branch of a tree, and carried him to their temple. "Here! He'll do for our sacrifice tonight!" they told the priest, and went about bathing







him, decorating him with garlands made of red flowers, and preparing him for the sombre act.

By then the Raja realised that there was no use trying to escape from them. He did not at that time possess even a pocket-knife, let alone other arms with which he could have fought. He thought it fit to resign himself to his fate.

The puja began; the tribals danced around him till it was time to please the goddess. The priest started the *arati*. Yadavendra Rai brought his palms together in prayer. "Oh! Divine Mother! Please pardon me if ever I have sinned against you. Bless

me with a way to save my life. Or if you have ordained that my blood should wipe off your anger, so be it. I'm willing to be sacrificed, for your pleasure and peace!"

Suddenly, there was lightning and in the flash, the priest noticed the Raja's missing thumb. "What have you done, you fellows!" he shouted at the tribals. "Look at him! He does not have all his limbs! He is not a perfect human being! How can we offer such an ugly, uncouth man to our Mother? Unholy! This place has been desecrated! There won't be any sacrifice today. Get hold of someone better tomorrow. And see that this man does not remain here even for a moment. Take him to the road — blindfolded!"

Before he was led out of the temple, the Raja paid his obeisance to the goddess and expressed his gratitude to the Divine Mother—in silence. His blindfold was removed only when he and the two tribals, who had escorted him, reached the road. The first lights of dawn could already be seen on the horizon. As he trudged his way, he was not quite sure whether he had done the right thing by not disclosing his identity to the



tribals.

Luckily for him, search parties had spread all over the kingdom and one group came across the Raja on the way, and they took him to the palace. Once there, as he was recounting his adventure to Queen Aishwarya, he narrated how his missing thumb had saved his life.

"Don't you remember our minister telling you that it is all for your good?" she reminded him.

"Yes, whatever he had meant by that," said the Raja, "he had only meant well. I must release him from prison!"

When Poornendu Rao was brought before him, Yadavendra Rai first apologised to him. "All for your good, sire!" he remarked with folded hands.

"Tell me, Poornendu," asked the Raja, "everytime you made that remark, something was

happening to me. But you said that when you were being taken to the prison! How was it good for *me*?"

"Sire?" answered Poornendu Rao. "If you had not sent me to prison, I might have accompanied you to the forest; instead of you, I might have been caught by the tribals and offered to their goddess; and *you* might have lost *your* minister. Because of your missing thumb, you were found unfit to be sacrificed. So, you were saved. And I'm safe with you, to serve you till death."

Raja Yadavendra Rai was very pleased with Poornendu Rao. He took off his pearl necklace and put it on his affectionate, wise minister. For once he waited for that typical remark from Poornendu Rao. Was he disappointed when his minister silently walked away from his presence?





## LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF THE GREAT

### "Human being, not a monster"

Before he became Vice-President of India and later President, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan had a long innings as an educationist. He was just 20 when he was appointed Assistant Lecturer in the Presidency College, Madras. To supplement his meagre salary, he took tuitions and one of his students was Mohammed Usman ("Just help me pass the B.A. exam!" was his plea to the teacher!), who later became Vice-Chancellor of Madras University, acting Governor of Madras Province (the first Indian to be elevated to that position by the British rulers), and a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Meanwhile the worthy teacher had moved to Mysore University as Professor, then to Calcutta University as Professor, visiting Professor at Oxford University (the first Indian to teach there), Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University, and then Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University, till 1948. No wonder, Dr. Radhakrishnan is mainly remem-


bered and revered as a teacher. September 5—his birthday—is observed in India as Teachers Day.

Between 1949 and 1952, he was India's ambassador to the Soviet Union where he met the Russian dictator, Stalin, three months after his arrival in Moscow. The Indian ambassador reminded him of Emperor Asoka, who renounced war to become a monk. "You've waded your way to power through force. Who knows that might not happen to you also." To which Stalin smilingly replied, "I was in a seminary for five years!"

A day before Dr. Radhakrishnan was returning to India in 1952, he had a farewell audience with Stalin when he found his face bloated because of ill-health. He patted Stalin on the cheek and passed his hand over his head. "You're the first person to treat me as a human being," remarked the Soviet dictator "and not as a monster. You're leaving us and I'm sad." Stalin died six months later.







New Tales of King Vikram and  
the Vampire

## AN OFFER DECLINED

**D**ark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King, you're making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. I appreciate your tenacity. Instead of enjoying a comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still after me. Maybe you've landed yourself in some problem or predicament. I'm now reminded of a prince





who was caught between the horns of a dilemma. Listen to me.” The vampire then narrated a story.

Vijay Gupta was the King of Anantapuri. His only child—son Viswajit—grew up to be a strong young man. The king wished to perform his wedding and crown him as king. His search for a suitable bride for Viswajit ended with the choice of Amritavalli, the princess of Chandrapur. He chose her because he came to know that Viswajit and Amritavalli had already met and the two were attracted to each other. The

ruler of Chandrapur was extremely happy when he was told of King Vijay Gupta’s desire. However, the wedding was delayed because the royal astrologer of Anantapuri was yet to find an auspicious day for the wedding.

One day, Viswajit set out on a pleasure trip along with his friend Nagarjun. The charioteer took them along the beautiful parts of the forest and the two friends enjoyed the trip very much. Suddenly, a herd of elephants came that way and the horses ran hither and thither and soon went out of control and hit a tree. Viswajit was thrown out a little away and he fell into a pond. His friend and the charioteer were also thrown out of the chariot.

Viswajit was unconscious for sometime. When he came back to his senses, he found himself in the pond. With some difficulty, he managed to wade to the shore and somehow reached where his friend and the charioteer were lying. They gave a shriek when they saw him. “What made you shriek with fear?” he asked them.

The two did not know what to tell him, how to reply him,





because they wondered whether it was the prince at all who was standing before them. When he found them hesitating to reply to his question, Viswajit again asked them, "Why are you afraid? What has happened?" Nagarjun and the charioteer still maintained stark silence. And they continued to look at him from head to foot.

Viswajit now realised that something must have happened to him to make them bewildered by his sight. So, he looked at himself. And what did he see other than that he had turned a beautiful girl! He was no longer wearing the dress of a prince but

was attired in clothes befitting a grown-up girl. Not only clothes, but jewellery, too. He touched his hands; how soft they had become. Not only his hands, but other parts, too.

Viswajit now realised that a transformation had taken place after his fall into the pond. He had no idea how he could get back his old form and figure. And he became very sad. Anyway, he accompanied his friend and charioteer to the palace and went up to his father and narrated what had happened.

King Vijay Gupta immediately sent for the sorcerer whom he used to consult whenever he had







of the kingdom came to know of the prince's fate. Viswajit felt shy of going out among the public and so he remained in his apartments. Though in appearance he was like a girl, his behaviour and urges were still that of a male. But he was unable to give expression to them. He passed days cursing his fate.

King Vijay Gupta tried his best to console his son. He was now certain that the prince's wedding with Amritavalli would not take place. He informed her father, the ruler of Chandrapur, of what had happened to Viswajit and suggested that he should find another match for his daughter.

Meanwhile, Princess Amritavalli was not sitting idle. She, too, gathered all news about Viswajit and wrote him a letter: "Fate had brought us together and we spent days and months hoping that we would be enjoined in holy wedlock. But again it was fate that you should fall into a magic pond and become a woman. However, how can I forget you? I had already found a place for you in my heart. I cannot be separated from you under any count. I have, therefore, taken a decision: I too shall

similar problems. The sorcerer asked Viswajit several questions and came to certain conclusions on the basis of his replies. "Sire! The prince had fallen into a magic pond. If a man were to get into the pond, he would become a woman; and if a woman entered it, she would turn into a male. The pond had such a curse on it. Nobody can escape that curse, not even our prince. I am afraid, he'll have to be reconciled to his fate."

Vijay Gupta was very much upset as he listened to the sorcerer's explanation. Soon the people





get into the same magic pond and allow myself to be transformed into a male. If that happens, we can then get married, too. By that, our desire will be fulfilled and the wishes of our parents also will be fulfilled."

Prince Viswajit was touched by her words and her offer. He took the letter to his parents. Both the king and queen read the letter. "It is very clear from this letter how deeply Amritavalli is in love with you. Anyway, what ever you feel about her suggestion, you may disclose it to us," said King Vijay Gupta.

Prince Viswajit, who still had the form of a female thought for a moment and said, "Father, I don't approve of Amritavalli's desire. If allowed, that may lead to other complications. She should take a more suitable prince as her husband. That's what I propose to write to her."

His father and mother both were stupefied by his decision. If they all agreed to Amritavalli's suggestion, she and Viswajit could lead a happy life in the palace. They were unable to guess whether their son had any other motive in rejecting Amritavalli's



offer. They again tried to convince the prince that he should accept Amritavalli as his life's companion once she took a male form. But Viswajit was adamant and did not agree with them.

The vampire concluded his narration. "O King!" he looked straight into King Vikramaditya's eyes. "Do you think Viswajit's decision was correct? Was he guided by his apprehension that once Amritavalli became a man, he might have to be subservient to her? Or did he lose all interest in Amritavalli, despite the fact they were once in love with each other?"





Was that the reason for his asking her to choose someone else as her husband? Or was he thinking how he would fare as a queen to Amritavalli when she ascended the throne? What exactly was the guiding factor? If you know the answer and yet opt to remain silent, let me warn you, your head will blow up into a thousand pieces!”

King Vikramaditya did not have to think for an answer. “Viswajit was capable of ascertaining and assessing not only his wishes but those of others as well. Even when he had turned a woman, he continued to have the urges and desires of a man. He knew what difficulties he would have to face and suffer. Similarly,

even if Amritavalli were to become a man, her desires would remain that of a woman. She, too, would face similar complications and suffer as a consequence. He was, therefore, certain that they would not lead a happy life. He did not wish to bring sorrow to her by agreeing to her suggestion and accepting his parents’ advice. That’s why he did not wish to marry Amritavalli, for the sake of a bright future for her. I’ve no doubt his decision was correct and wise.”

The vampire knew that Vikramaditya had outsmarted him once again and he flew back to the ancient tree taking the corpse with him. The king drew his sword and went after the vampire.

**A joke never gains over an enemy, but often loses a friend.**







24

*(The snakes invoked by Ravana's son bind Rama and Lakshmana who appear lifeless. Sugriva consoles Vibhishana : they should try to revive the brothers. Meanwhile, Garuda, the king of birds, arrive. On seeing him, the snakes leave the two bodies. With gentle strokes by his wings, he wakes up the brothers. To Rama's query who their saviour is, Garuda merely replies that he is their friend. The Vanaras and rakshasas meet in encounters, in which Ravana's commanders, one after the other, meets with their end.)*

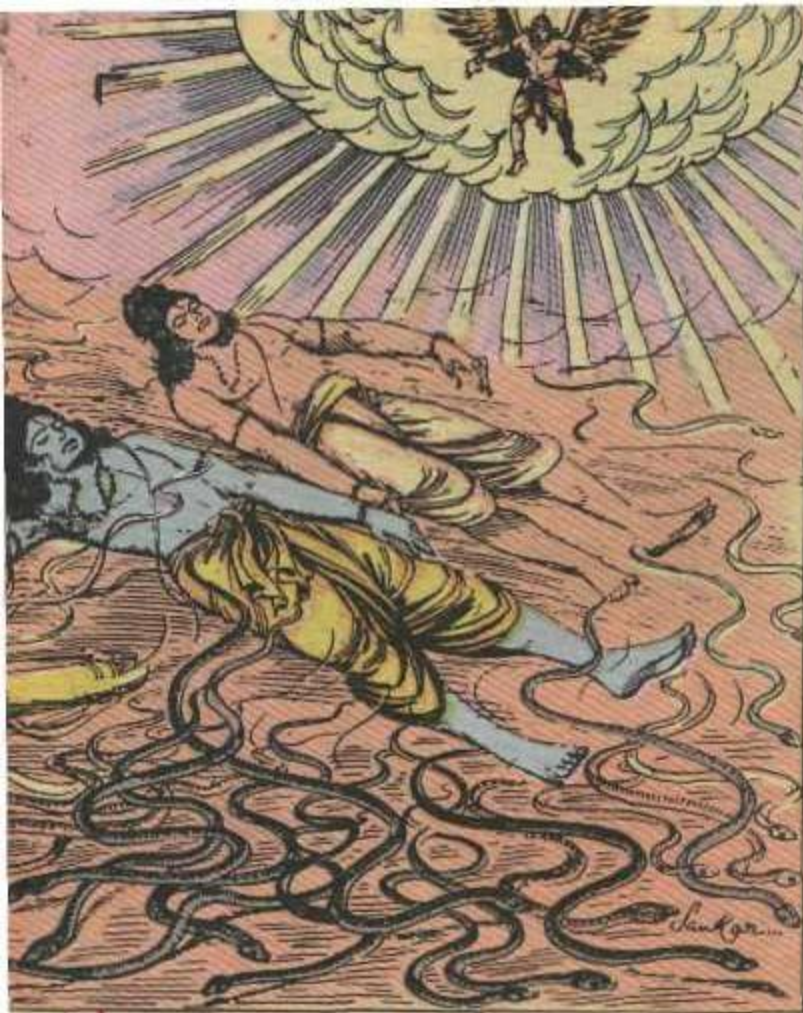
**W**hen the Vanara soldiers found Vibhishana unconsolable on seeing Rama and Lakshmana lying down unconscious, they went and brought Sugriva. The Vanara king tried to console Vibhishana, telling him that their heroes were not dead and were only unconscious from the effects of the *naga* arrow

sent by Indrajit. "Rama and Lakshmana will not leave us in the lurch. They'll soon come out of their stupor and lead us to victory. They're certain to make you the King of Lanka. But before that, let's find out how we can wake them up. I'm sure Ravana must have taken them for dead and must be jubilant at

**VICTORIES FOR VANARAS**







the thought. He does not know that his own life is soon coming to an end," said Sugriva.

He sent a Vanara soldier to call his uncle, Sushena. "Can you think of a way to wake up Rama and Lakshmana?" he asked him.

"I'm reminded of a similar situation during the war between the Devas and the Asuras, who resorted to all sorts of tricks and several Devas were affected," said Sushena. "Some of the Devas even died in the battle. Those who had only swooned were revived by the Devas' preceptor, Brihaspati. And he did it

with the *Mritasanjivani mantra* and mountain herbs. We can also try the same method. I think **Hanuman** is the best person to go to the Himalayas and bring the medicinal plants. You must send him immediately."

Suddenly, a strong wind blew. The Vanaras looked all around to find what had caused such a strong wind. They saw the king of birds, Garuda, approaching them. The moment the snakes, who had coiled around Rama and Lakshmana, saw Garuda, they unwound themselves and left the place, lest they became a prey to Garuda. The Vanara soldiers watched the sight with wonder.

When he neared Rama and Lakshmana, Garuda fanned them with his wings. Lo and behold! The next moment both of them came out of their stupor as if they were waking up from slumber. "By your kindness, we both got back our lives," said Rama with folded hands, "I feel as if I've just come back after meeting my ancestors. I feel I've acquired a new life! Please tell me which divine person you are."

"Rama! I'm one of your friends. My name is Garuda, and



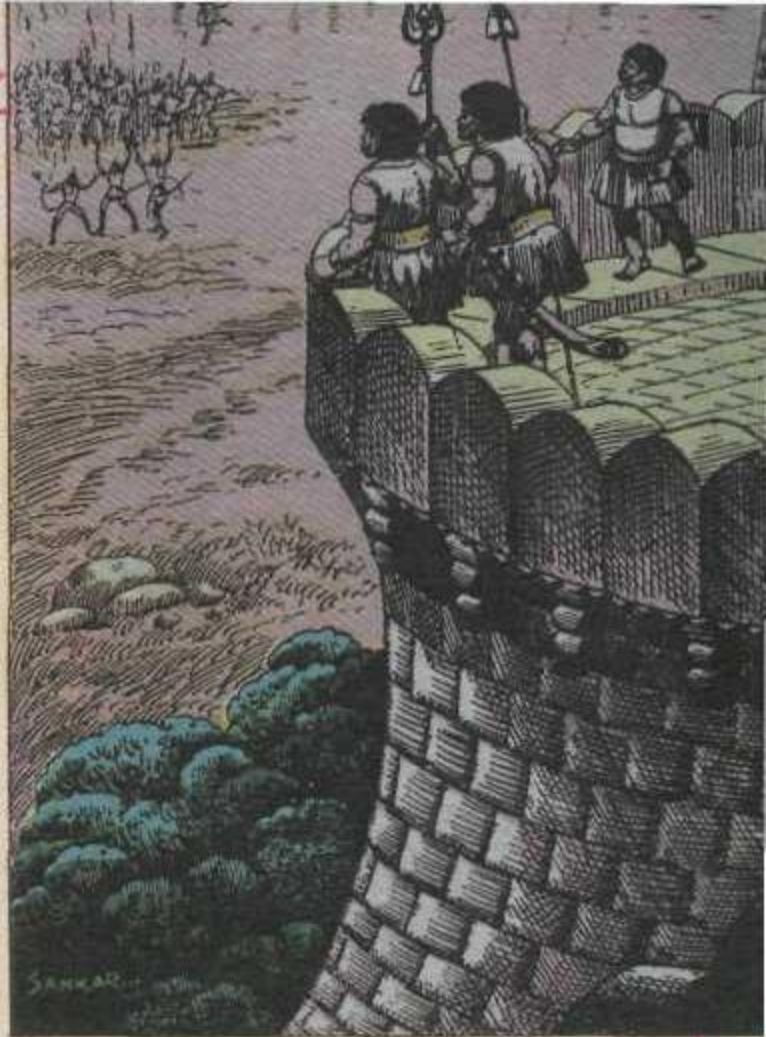


I rushed here to help you both. The *naga* arrows that hit you were real snakes and they had bound you for some time. Be careful in battle. These Rakshasas are wicked and wily. Don't trust them to wage a just war. They'll employ all sorts of magic and tricks. You must be very alert," warned Garuda.

Rama looked at Garuda with awe and wonder. "Let me take leave of you for the time being. Some day I shall come again and tell you how I became your friend." Garuda bade farewell of them and flew back into the skies. Rama, Lakshmana, and all others there curiously watched Garuda fly away.

The Vanara soldiers were overjoyed when they saw Rama and Lakshmana very much alive. They shouted aloud—loud enough to be heard all over Lanka. Ravana wondered what would have made the Vanaras shout in joy. "Haven't Rama and Lakshmana died? If so, they should only be weeping and wailing. Wonder what has happened." He sent some soldiers to find out and report to him.

What the soldiers saw when they came out stupefied them.

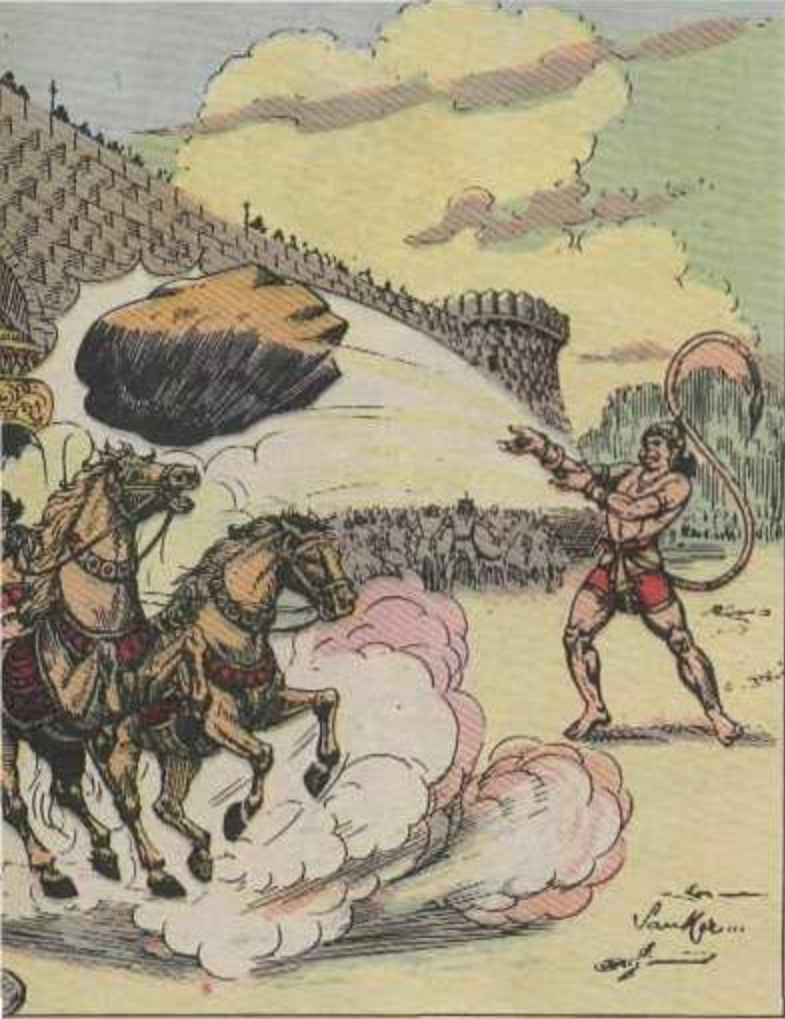


Rama and Lakshmana were not only not dead, but very much alive and getting ready for another attack. They rushed back to Ravana to alert him.

Ravana was really flabbergasted. "Indrajit had bound them with his *naga* arrow and the snakes should have taken their lives. But if they are alive, then something strange must have happened. We've to be well guarded, and we should not let them escape any more." He then ordered Dhoomaraksha to lead an army and attack Rama and Lakshmana. "And don't come







back without killing them!" he commanded.

Dhoomaraksha rode a beautiful chariot, followed by a huge army. They marched towards the west. The soldiers were fully prepared to capture all of the Vanara soldiers and their leaders. The Vanara soldiers saw the army approaching and got ready to meet the challenge. The two armies soon clashed and a fierce fight ensued. The array of weapons used by the rakshasa soldiers were effectively met by the Vanaras who hurled trees and stones at them. Several of the

Rakshasas were killed in the encounter. Several others made good their escape from the battlefield. Dhoomaraksha was angry with them and also desperate. He then fought fiercely without observing any of the usual ethics and rules of war. There were many deaths among the Vanara soldiers, too.

Hanuman came to know of the fate of the Vanara soldiers. He was very angry. He caught hold of a big boulder and threw it at the chariot that carried Dhoomaraksha. The beautiful vehicle was smashed to smithereens. Dhoomaraksha held aloft his mace and challenged Hanuman for a fight, without exhibiting the fear lurking in his mind whether he would come out of it alive at all. Their fight did not last long, because Dhoomaraksha could not survive the single blow that Hanuman gave him on his head.

The Vanara soldiers were now enthused to engage each one of the rakshasa soldiers in fight. They took to their heels and fled back to the city. When he heard that Dhoomaraksha also had been killed in battle, Ravana's anger knew no bounds. He then





called for Vajradamshttra and asked him to go and put an end to Rama, Lakshmana, Sugriva, Vibhishana, and other commanders of the Vanara army.

Soon, Vajradamshttra gathered a large army and started out. Now, he was quite notorious for his magic warfare. His soldiers carried different types of weapons. At that time, the Vanara army was under the command of Angada. They clashed with the Rakshasas. Angada successfully warded off an attack on his soldiers, and made a mincemeat of the Rakshasas. Many of their friends challenged Angada, but he chopped off their heads which rolled on the ground like balls.

Vajradamshttra watched how his soldiers were falling a prey to the Vanara army and how many of them were running away to escape Angada's anger. He knew his own life was in danger unless he went in for a fight. He then sent a shower of arrows. Angada managed to topple his chariot and Vajradamshttra fell down unconscious. Angada made a mistake by thinking that the Rakshasa commander was no more. Because, Vajradamshttra



soon recovered from his swoon and attacked Angada with his mace. Angada gave him such a blow that he reeled to the ground, when Angada hit him again on the head. That was the end of Vajradamshttra. A loud cheer from the Vanara soldiers went up in the air.

Ravana was very much agitated when he was told of the death of Vajradamshttra. Why this blow after blow? he wondered. On the other hand, the Vanaras enjoyed one victory after another. Ravana then sent Ahamba with a large army. They







were met by Neela, Mainda, and Dwatiya, who wondered among themselves why yet another Rakshasa commander should come in a chariot if it was only to greet death!

But contrary to their estimate, Ahamba was no mean commander, and the Vanaras found it difficult to overpower him. On seeing their predicament, Hanuman went to their assistance. Ahamba did not spare him, but began sending arrows one after another. Hanuman was quite unconcerned and he stamped his foot on the ground, which then

cracked with a loud sound. Ahamba went reeling and searched for some support to steady himself. Hanuman made use of that opportunity to hurl a huge stone at him. But Ahamba took aim with an arrow which broke the stone into pieces. Hanuman then pulled out a whole tree and hit Ahamba on his head with it. He fell down dead.

The rakshasa soldiers threw away their weapons and fled to the city, while the Vanaras crowded around Hanuman and carried him on their shoulders jubilantly. Their shouts of joy reverberated everywhere.

The news of Ahamba's death at the hands of Hanuman made Ravana jittery. He consulted his council of ministers and discussed the next course of action and what other strategy they should adopt. Despite the large scale deaths among the rakshasa soldiers, the army of Ravana remained formidable. However, when he saw the Vanara army that had encircled his fortress, he was aghast. Wherever he turned, there were Vanaras and more Vanaras. And every one of them was jubilant.









Ravana went back to the palace and sent for his chief commander Prahastha. "I'm afraid the Vanara army has all but captured the city. Also, it will be very difficult to defeat them. I think only myself, Kumbhakarna, Indrajit, and yourself—we alone will be able to deal any blow on them. So, I command you to go first, annihilate the Vanaras and come back victorious!"

Prahastha became bold enough to remind Ravana once again of his advice to send back Sita. "Perhaps you recall our earlier discussion on the subject, O! lord of Lanka! I had even then warned you that we were in for trouble if we did not send back Sita. But you never accepted that advice. And I, too, didn't want to do anything

against your wish. Even now, I'll be only too happy to sacrifice myself for your sake!" said Prahastha very emotionally.

He also gathered a large army and set out in his chariot amidst drum-beating and fanfare. He was accompanied by warriors like Narananda, Kumbhaharana, Mahanatha, and Samunatha. The moment Rama saw the approaching army, he turned to Vibhishana. "That man appears to be a great warrior. Who's he?"

Vibhishana then gave him all details. "He's Prahastha, one of Ravana's ablest commanders. He has one-third of Ravana's army under his command. He is quite an efficient army leader. And well-versed in fighting."

—To continue





# WORLD OF NATURE

## Toileteries for Monkeys

Monkeys have a habit of scratching their bodies—like human beings. If they are not quite satisfied with the exercise, they often take help. They can often be seen wiping each other's bodies with leaves. It is also not a rare sight when one monkey breaks a twig and cleans the teeth of another monkey!



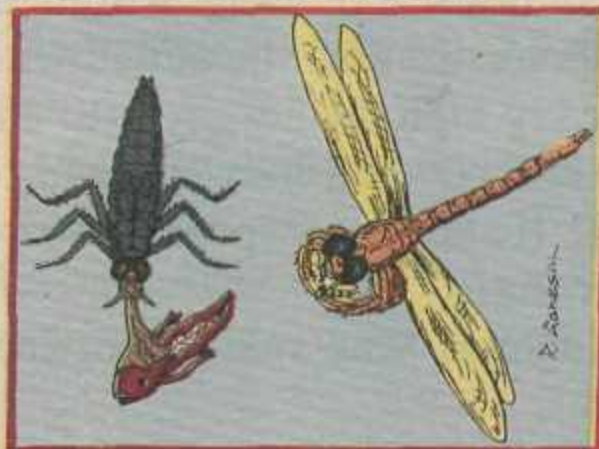
## A Dragon Among Flies

The larva of a dragonfly is called 'nymph'. The nymphs are voracious eaters and eat little fish, insects, snails, and tadpoles; if any of these is not available, even another nymph will do! The nymphs thus become a veritable terror in the underwater world. After a long stay under water, a nymph decides to come out of water when it feels he is in for some metamorphosis. True, his skin peels off, and out comes the dragonfly with a beautiful pair of wings. Now he hunts for prey while flying and does not spare any insect or other living beings larger than insects.



## An Archer Among Fish

The Archer is a tiny fish, less than 20 cm long. It has a silvery coat, with a few dark bands running across its body. It hunts for food in a peculiar way. If its largesized eyes can spot an insect at the edge of a hanging leaf, it will go near the leaf. After positioning itself below the leaf, it pushes its snout a little above the water, takes aim, and shoots a steady jet of water at the insect, which then falls into the water to become an easy prey. While perched on the leaf, the insect is unsuspecting, because the fish is seen not right below, but at an angle. Physics tells you that an object seen through water is at an angle.







## A Prescription for the Doctor

**A**fter Gopal set up practice as a doctor, the first patient who went to him had some strange disease. He examined him and gave him some medicines. The patient had hardly taken his leave when Gopal rushed inside, shivering all over. His wife, Rugmini, who had seen him all right till he went out to meet the patient, was aghast. "What happened? Why are you shivering like this?"

"That patient has an infectious disease," said Gopal, "and I had to hold his hand while examining. I think I've caught hold of the same disease," he added with a heavy sigh as he got into his bed and covered himself head to foot. He did not speak a word after that.

Rugmini was really worried.

She hurried to his uncle, from whom Gopal had learnt medicine. Murthy was a popular physician of the place. He came and examined Gopal, who remained silent all the while. "I'm afraid he has contracted some dreaded disease. If he is not treated properly, he may even lose his speech. The best treatment will be through diet. Give him just bitter gourd, and nothing else. You may prepare any curry, but everything should be made of only bitter gourd, and no other vegetable. He should be all right in about a week's time," Murthy assured Rugmini. She told him that he would be given only bitter gourd.

Gopal was not aware of his uncle's prescription and instructions. So, when he was served



bitter gourd, he chided Rugmini. "You know I'm not well. Instead of giving me something tasty, you've prepared only this wretched gourd! You couldn't find anything else in this house?"

"Your uncle's medicine seems to have done you good?" remarked Rugmini, when she heard him speak once again.

It was then Gopal realised the significance of his uncle's method of treatment. Anybody who is ill will make a fuss of eating or drinking whatever he does not like. Gopal now decided to try it out on his first patient, Krishna. "Rugmini," he directed his wife, "go to Krishna's house and find out from his wife whether there is anything that he dislikes. I shall try uncle Murthy's method on him."

"Now you seem to be intelligent," Rugmini complimented her husband as she set out for Krishna's house. On the way, she ran into Murthy. "How's Gopal today?" he enquired. Rugmini told him all that had happened at home.

"Now I shall disclose it to you, Rugmini," said Murthy in confidence. "Gopal did not have any



illness. I wanted to get all the truth from him, but he was not speaking at all. That's why I suggested bitter gourd morning, afternoon, and evening. After all, he was meeting his first patient. Every patient will not pass on his illness to the doctor! Anyway Krishna needs something else, not bitter gourd. Gopal is wrong if he intends applying the same method! Come, let's go home."

Murthy pulled up Gopal. "You may not know, Gopal. Krishna had come to me for treatment, and it was I who sent





him over here. If you treat him correctly, you will attract a lot of patients. You went wrong in your diagnosis of Krishna's illness. You were careless; he is not suffering from any infectious disease."

Gopal felt ashamed. He asked uncle Murthy what he would advise him to prescribe for Krishna. Murthy explained the treatment and left, having assured himself that he had allayed all fear in Gopal. However, soon after his uncle went away, Gopal started shivering and he got into bed again.

Rugmini was furious with him. "Now, whom did you examine to get back this shivering?"

"I'm afraid I'm not completely all right. Let me take rest for some days. I shall give you some

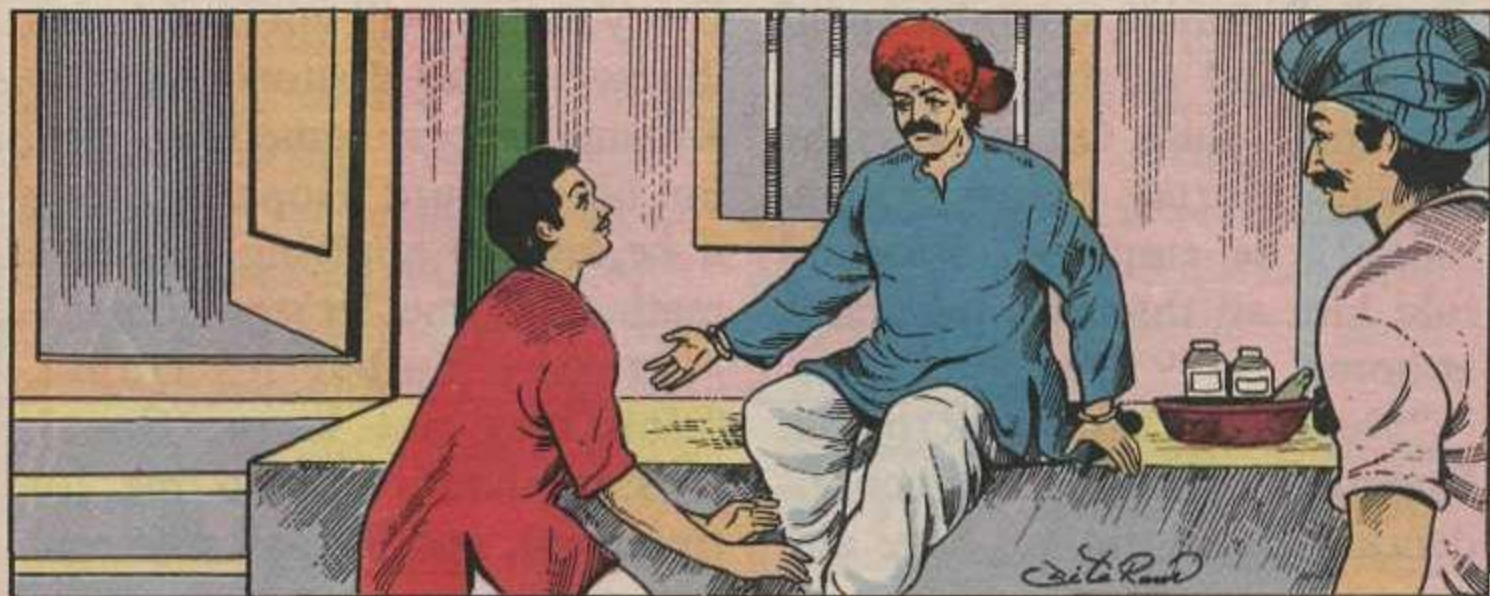
medicines, you may go and give them to Krishna."

"I think the best treatment for you," said Rugmini still angry with her husband, "is bitter gourd tonic. I shall give it to you every day. I tell you, you're just being fussy."

"You mean to say I'm afraid of examining patients?" said Gopal, still feeling ashamed of himself.

"I'm not saying anything," Rugmini protested. "Your uncle feels that it is only natural for doctors to become wary of their patients and their illnesses in the beginning."

Gopal now felt that having learnt everything from his uncle, he should not have again bothered him about Krishna's illness. He mustered enough courage to examine patients and soon made a name for himself.





## Towards Better English

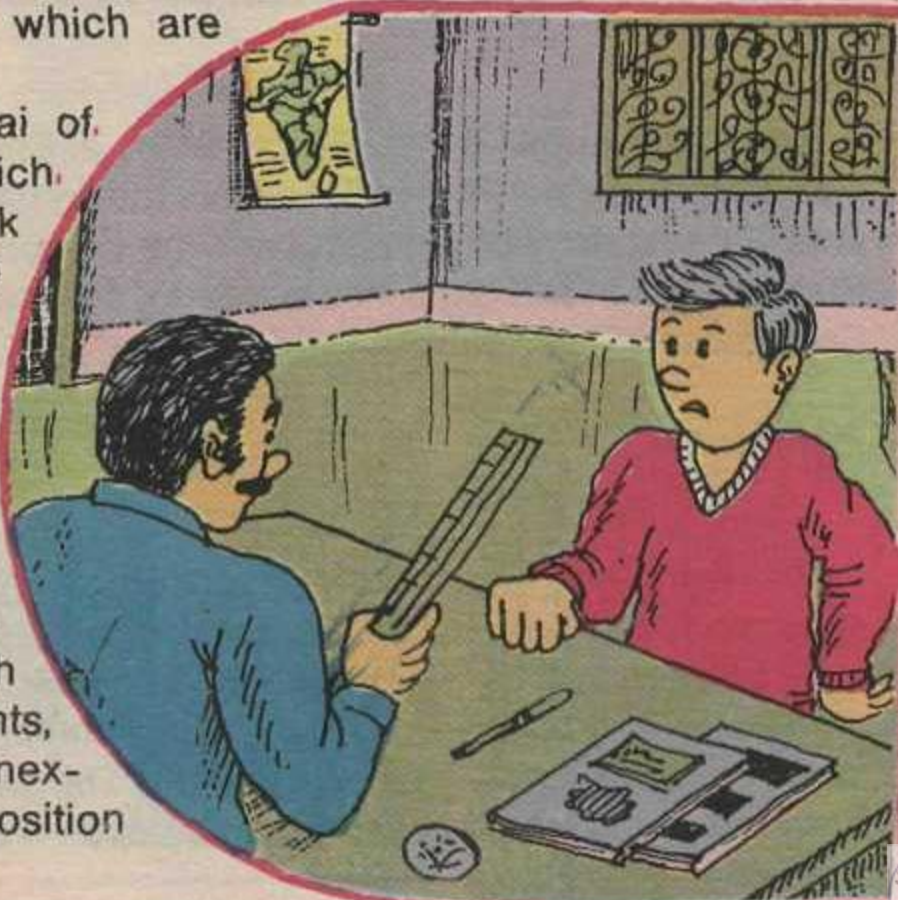
# No Harm to Knuckles!

Jyotiranjana Biswal, of Durgapur, was with his friend, when he was complaining about his college-going son and the way he was spending his pocket-money. "It's time I gave him a rap on the knuckles," he said with a sigh. Naturally, Biswal was bewildered. Would the

youngster be injured? He had heard of knuckle-dusters, a piece of metal worn on the back of one's fingers as a weapon. No, a rap *on* (also *over*) the knuckles will not cause any injury in that sense. Giving a rap *on the knuckles* only means, administer a warning to or criticise a person for something he or she has done. Injury or no injury, one would better avoid receiving a rap on the knuckles! By the way, a knucklehead is a stupid fellow, always bungling things. He certainly deserves a rap on the knuckles!

Rashmi Shetty of Bangalore is confused. Some of her friends said, "few days ago" is correct, and some others argued "few days back" is more correct. Whenever the time factor is specifically mentioned (a *minute* ago, an *hour* ago, a *week* ago, three *days* ago, a *month* ago, two *years* ago) or at least indicated (some minutes ago, a few hours ago, about a month ago), the adverb 'ago' will sound better. Compare this with 'some time back', when it is not certain whether the reference is to hours, days, weeks, months, or years. Also 'long ago' and 'a long time back', both of which are correct.

Similarly, Chhoto Gawai of Nagpur wants to know which is more correct—"The book is reprinted *with* (or *by*) the permission of the author". The preposition "by" is to be preferred to "with". "By leave", "by order", "by the permission" are all different forms of acceptable acknowledgement. Compare them with "reprinted *with* amendments, additions, modifications, annexures"—where the preposition "with" is more appropriate.







## LET US KNOW

**What is meant by 'aurora borealis'?**

**— Vinod, Hyderabad**

The rich orange colour that can be seen on the eastern horizon at dawn is aurora. It is also a luminous phenomenon seen in Polar regions, at times even seen with a tremulous motion. **Aurora borealis** is the northern aurora, or northern lights; **aurora australis** is a similar phenomenon in the southern hemisphere.

**Who invented television? When did TV come to India?**

**• R.Aarthi, Santhosapuram**

It was John Logie Baird (1888-1946), a British electrical engineer, who pioneered television. In 1925, he gave the first public demonstration of a workable TV system. Three years later, he demonstrated colour TV. The Delhi Station of All India Radio introduced TV service on an experimental basis on September 15, 1959.

**What is fire?**

**— M.S. Kiran Kumar, Bangalore**

Fire is the hot, bright flame produced by any article that burns. The heat thus produced can also be termed as fire. It is neither solid, nor liquid. It can only be seen and probably felt, when any part of the human body comes in contact with fire. Shall we call it a phenomenon? Physics will give you a more detailed, analytical explanation. The word takes its origin from the German *feuer*, which in Old English became *fyr*.



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Talent is what you possess; genius is what possesses you.

**-Malcolm Cowley**

A man's reputation is the opinion people have of him. His character is what he really is.

**-Jack Miner**

Every time an artist dies, part of the vision of mankind passes with him.

**-Franklin D. Roosevelt**





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